



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

MEDIA RELEASE

NSW firefighters return from record Tasmanian deployment

29 March 2019

This week the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) members wrapped up the most prolonged interstate deployment in the Service's history.

NSW RFS Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons said the contingent who arrived back in Sydney on Monday completes the duration of assistance that began on 5 January this year.

"This has been the most sustained support given to another state since the tragic Black Saturday Victorian bush fires of 2009," Commissioner Fitzsimmons said.

"A total of 682 personnel have been deployed over this time to help battle major bush fires that have burnt more than 200,000 hectares across Tasmania.

"I commend the important work our NSW and ACT firefighters have done both on the frontline and in positions of aviation, logistics, public information and incident management."

Commissioner Fitzsimmons said over the past 11 weeks, these highly trained personnel have been working across Tasmania with remote conditions being physically challenging, especially for Remote Area Firefighters.

"I acknowledge the exceptional commitment of the 221 volunteer NSW RFS firefighters who have worked in some of the most difficult and rugged terrain in the country.

"I also note the support that the NSW based Large Air Tankers have provided, along with the members who were deployed for base camp operations," Commissioner Fitzsimmons.

"The NSW RFS coordinated the response, with more than 370 NSW RFS members, 155 NSW NPWS, 12 FRNSW, 11 NSW SES, 79 ACT RFS & Parks firefighters supported in the field by 54 NSW Ambulance Special Operations Team members.

While thanking volunteers and staff for their commitment and effort, Commissioner Fitzsimmons has also praised the support of families and employers across the state.

"Firefighting can be very demanding and our members can't do it without the support of their loved ones," Commissioner Fitzsimmons said.

"We should also thank the many employers across NSW who have generously given their workers time off to help in Tasmania's time of need."



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